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CENTRAL FAX CENTER****JAN 03 2007**Remarks

The Office Action of July 6, 2006 by Examiner Vanaman has been carefully reviewed by the undersigned attorney. In addition, the telephone interview held with Examiner Vanaman on December 28, 2006 is gratefully acknowledged by the undersigned attorney. To the extent relevant, the substance of that telephone interview will be set forth in subsequent portions of the Remarks section of this Amendment in conjunction with the discussion of specific claims.

Amended Claim 1

Amended claim 1 was discussed with Examiner Vanaman, but no agreement was reached with Examiner Vanaman as to claim 1. Limitation (f)(iv) of claim 1 has been further amended from the form discussed with Examiner Vanaman as set forth above.

As pointed out to Examiner Vanaman, neither Steele nor Arendt disclose or suggest the claimed arrangement of reel cutting units in a **hybrid** powered mower having both electric reel and traction drives. However, the Examiner should note U.S. Patent 5,406,778 to Lamb et al. (mower with three electrically driven reel cutting units and electric traction drive operated by electric power from a battery pack) and U.S. Patent 2,057,417 to Clapper (electrically driven reel cutting units with mechanical traction drive with the reels being operated by electric power from an engine driven generator). Both Lamb and Clapper were cited to the PTO in the Background of the Invention Section of the application.

Amended Claims 3 and 5

Amended claims 3 and 5 were not discussed with Examiner Vanaman during the interview.

Claim 3 has been amended only to correct a typographical error in the spelling of the word "electric".

Claim 5 has been amended to more clearly recite the three indicator lights that show the state of charge of the battery power source to the operator, i.e. lights 82g, 82y and 82r in the display shown in Fig. 4. These lights are not shown or suggested by the box 11 in Arendt. Accordingly, claim 5 is additionally allowable due to the recitation of the indicator lights.

Amended Claims 24 and 25

Amended claims 24 and 25 were discussed with Examiner Vanaman during the interview. Claim 24 as amended herein inserts the additional phrase "at various times" into the description of the supply of electric power by the electric power generating device and by the battery power source during the hybrid mode of operation. This change is simply meant to clarify the usual nature of operation of a typical hybrid system in a hybrid mode. In addition, the concept of selective actuation of the switch is not limited to one in which the operator is the cause of the selective actuation.

While no formal agreement with Examiner Vanaman was reached as to claims 24 and 25, Examiner Vanaman did indicate that it appeared that claim 24 avoided the rejection of record and that claim 25 had been changed in a substantial manner.

As pointed out to Examiner Vanaman, as to amended claim 24, Young mechanically drives the cutting blade through the

engine and does not electrically drive the cutting blade. It would not have been obvious to have an all battery mode in Young since the cutting blade would then not be driven at all. Accordingly, amended claim 24 is allowable.

With respect to amended claim 25, the switch 74 of this invention only shuts off the internal combustion engine and does not otherwise change or affect any of the electrical circuit connections to the electric power generating device. When Arendt's switch is thrown to go to an all battery mode of operation, this also short circuits the generator to use the generator as the starter motor to restart the engine. See Page 2 of Arendt, Lines 93-106. Accordingly, amended claim 25 additionally defines over Arendt and is additionally allowable.

Amended Claims 26 and 28

Amended claims 26 and 28 were discussed with Examiner Vanaman during the interview, but no agreement was reached with Examiner Vanaman as to them.

Claims 26 and 28 were amended to add some language that had been inadvertently omitted from these claims when such claims were copied from U.S. Patent 6,857,253. The added language only supplies antecedent basis for later recitations in each claim. For example, the added language in claim 26 only supplies antecedent basis for the later recitation of "said at least one ground engaging wheel". The added language in claim 28 only supplies antecedent basis for the later recitations of "said internal combustion engine" and "said mechanical motion".

The Examiner should consider as to whether the prior rejection of claims 26 and 28 as being anticipated by Young still applies to claims 26 and 28 and clarify the record in this respect.

New Claims 30 - 32

New claims 30 - 32 are directed to a method of cutting grass on a golf course using a hybrid powered reel mower having an all battery mode of operation and a hybrid mode of operation. This method of operation is clearly supported in the specification of the above-identified patent application in the first full paragraph of page 11 of the application.

In the mower art, battery powered electric machines (such as Lamb) were known, and electric machines that were powered by IC engines and a generator (such as Clapper) were known, but not an electric machine powered by a hybrid drive system where the engine could be selectively shut off when noise is an issue and then used when noise is not an issue. Arendt does not teach using a switch on a mowing machine at selective times when quiet is required while cutting portions of a golf course.

In fact, there is no mention in Arendt of why the user would shut off the engine at will. Arendt does not teach or suggest using the switch when quiet is required when cutting grass on portions of a golf course and using the engine at other times. As noted, the mower art simply provided a specialized all battery machine if quiet were required.

Claim 30 as presented herein corresponds to what was discussed with the Examiner during the interview except that claim 30 talks about "portions" of the golf course rather than specifically about the "greens" of the golf course. The limitation that the portions of the golf course be the greens is now in dependent claim 32. In addition, claim 30 does not require that the operator selectively actuate the switch. While claims 30 and 31 were discussed with Examiner Vanaman during the interview, no agreement as to these claims was reached with the Examiner.

New Claims 33 and 34

New claim 33 was discussed with Examiner Vanaman during the interview. While no formal agreement with Examiner Vanaman was reached as to claim 33, Examiner Vanaman did indicate that it appeared that claim 33 avoided the prior art of record, subject to an additional search.

Claim 33 is directed to the use of indicators that display the current draw in the motors used to power the rotatable cutting reels of a reel cutting unit. Such current draw indicates whether or not the reel/bedknife adjustment is proper - i.e. too high a current draw can indicate an adjustment that is too tight and too low a current draw can indicate an adjustment that is too loose. This is useful information to display to the operator so that corrective action can be taken if need be. Note the individual current draw indicators 94 shown in Fig. 4 of the above-identified application.

No reference teaches displaying to the operator the current draw for the individual electric motors that power the reel cutting units. Accordingly, new claim 33 is allowable.

New claim 34 is directed in more detail to the nature of the current draw indicators. Claim 34 is additionally allowable.

The Need for Clarification re the Unique Mobility/Toro Mower

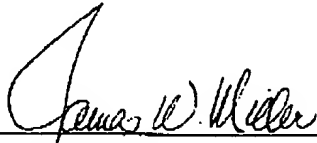
It is noted that Examiner Vanaman did not use the Unique Mobility/Toro mower as the basis for any rejections in this application. After discussing this with Examiner Vanaman, the undersigned attorney believes that this is due to an inability upon the present record to determine whether the Unique Mobility/Toro mower is or is not prior art. Toro has supplied

to the PTO all the facts currently known to it regarding how this mower was built and operated and the nature of the subsequent use of certain information relating to the mower by Unique Mobility as part of Unique's marketing materials.

It is respectfully requested that Examiner Vanaman clarify the record as to the PTO view concerning the prior art status of the Unique Mobility/Toro mower. If the PTO view is simply that it has insufficient facts to determine if the Unique Mobility/Toro qualifies as prior art, then it should so expressly state. This will avoid creating unwarranted implications that might conceivably be created by silence on this point - such as the implication that the Unique Mobility/Toro is not sufficient to reject any of the claims when the truth of the matter is simply that the PTO has decided that it cannot properly use the Unique Mobility/Toro as prior art based upon the current factual record in this patent application.

Respectfully presented,

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